

August 19, 2002

Public Notice for Clean Water Act, Section 401 Water Quality Certification

**Charles Hansen Sand and Gravel Extraction Operations
WDID No. 1B02125WNHU**

Humboldt County

On August 8, 2002, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Charles Hansen Sand and Gravel requesting Federal Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification for Charles Hansen's gravel extraction operations in Humboldt County, California. The application was deemed complete on August 15, 2002. The proposed project causes disturbances to waters of the United States associated with the Eel River Hydrologic Unit No. 111.00.

The proposed project is located near Fortuna, California in the Eel River (river mile 13) in portions of Sections 14 and 15, Township 2 North, Range 1 West, HB&M. Gravel extraction operations will occur at Hansen Truck Stop Bar.

The project involves the extraction of up to 50,000 cubic yards of gravel and fines per year from the lower Eel River. The project requires temporary disturbance to 0-14 acres at the Hansen Truck Stop Bar. Extraction methods include skimming, excavating wetland pits above the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM), excavating alcoves, and dry trenching where no surface flow is present. Equipment utilized for gravel extraction consists of front-end loaders, excavators, and bulldozers, which skim exposed gravel bars adjacent to the low-flow channel. Impacts caused by gravel extraction operations are temporary due to annual replenishment of gravel and fines during high winter flows.

Compensatory mitigation is not required for this project. Noncompensatory mitigation measures include the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs). BMPs required for gravel extraction operations are outlined in US Army Corps of Engineers' Letter of Permission, LOP 96-1, and include the use of existing haul roads and processing sites and limiting stream crossings when practicable. Vertical and horizontal offsets of the extraction area will be maintained to prevent incidental fill. Annual extraction plans are created to compliment natural bar topography, minimizing the potential for geomorphologic changes associated with gravel extraction activities.

The Humboldt County Planning Commission, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, adopted a Final Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on Gravel Removal from the Lower Eel River in 1992.

Staff is proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and Title 23, California Code of Regulations, Sections 3830-3869. Comments on this project should be submitted to Miguel Villicana at villm@rb1.swrcb.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.